Avoid Hanging Anything on Utility Poles

At Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC), we understand and can appreciate the need for posting yard sale signs or hanging decorations. Whether it’s to share information with the neighborhood or to get in the holiday spirit, at some point there’s a need to hang something up. But there’s one place hanging items don’t belong: on utility poles.

By attaching items to poles — from the tiniest of posters to something as large as a basketball hoop or birdhouse — you are not only breaking the law, but risking the lives of others, especially the linemen, whose jobs are already dangerous. It may not sound like a big deal, but a small nail, tack or screw partially driven into a pole can tear a lineman’s glove and clothing, compromising their safety and making them vulnerable to electrocution.

Not only do the attachments put line crews at risk, but anyone placing items on poles comes dangerously close to energized power lines.

A secondary concern is that moisture and insects get into holes surrounding nails, damaging the poles and increasing maintenance costs. That’s an expense to you, SVEC’s member-owners.

“Yard sale signs, event signs, party signs and holiday decorations. You name it, we’ve seen it,” said Scott Boyd, a line superintendent for the Winchester District. “People will use anything from staples to a size 16D nail to hang them, and that’s where the problem lies. Once the sign is removed or blows away with the wind, the fastener remains intact. The hazard is not only trying to climb the pole, but just walking by with something protruding out of the pole. I just don’t think most people realize how quickly these tacks, nails, etc., build up around the pole.”

“We have some poles in the Winchester city limits that have some kind of information fastened to them weekly, and you would be amazed at how many staples and nails are left there.”

You may be surprised to know fastening signs and advertising to a pole violates Virginia law, too. Anyone who places items on poles is subject to a civil penalty of $100, according to state code. Unauthorized attachments also violate the National Electric Safety Code.

Please help us keep our linemen — and the communities they serve — safe by removing any unauthorized items from utility poles. Fixtures not belonging to SVEC or another utility will be removed by line personnel, and the Cooperative is not responsible for any losses if an item is damaged or destroyed during removal.

Signs for yard sales, parties or other events should be put on stakes in the ground or another safe location. We appreciate your cooperation.
Lineman Shares Message at D.C. Gala

by Preston Knight

John Medved, a lineman first class with Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) in Winchester, attended the annual fundraising gala for the Charitable Foundation of the Energy Bar Association on June 7 in Washington, D.C. Medved was invited by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to represent electric cooperative linemen.

The Charitable Foundation’s mission is to support projects that have an energy-related purpose and are focused on improving lives worldwide. This year, the organization raised about $260,000 to assist the NRECA International Foundation with a project to provide electricity to 461 families in rural Bolivia.

In August, a team of 14 volunteer linemen from Oklahoma and Missouri cooperatives will construct 21 miles of power lines in Bolivia. The men, women and children in these communities will have better healthcare, improved education, safer streets and a chance at a better life, NRECA officials say.

Medved traveled to Haiti last summer for a similar project. He drew from that experience in his brief speech to the audience of nearly 300 people at the charitable gala.

“Before the trip, I took electricity for granted. Having lived without electricity for three weeks while in Haiti, I realize how fortunate we as Americans are to have reliable electricity,” Medved said.

A week after the meeting, Medved reflected on the event, noting that the room full of lawyers was “kind of shocked” that his background included a trip to Haiti.

“They were as amazed that they were there with me as much as I was amazed being there with them,” he said. “They live inside the Beltway and they don’t really have access to linemen.”

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(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

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“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. SVEC supports our armed services and veterans in employment opportunities.”
Shenandoah Acres Family Campground

Story and photos by Cammie Tutwiler

Time with family and friends spent around the lake or the campfire, mixed with sights of pileated woodpeckers, red-tailed hawks and goldfinches. Movies watched together, music enjoyed together, and most importantly, memories made together. Shenandoah Acres Family Campground, located on 134 acres in Stuarts Draft in Augusta County, offers the opportunity to enjoy all of this and more.

Garland Eustler and his wife, Carolynn Rubino, are going into their third season as owners of the property. The campground had 50 sites on its “original loop” and now boasts a total of 208 sites.

“Anything we can do to encourage families to spend time together is a good thing,” Eustler said. “If they’re going camping in the Shenandoah Valley, we want them to know to come here.”

Since December 2013, the couple and their staff have worked to improve the property, diligently maintaining and cleaning it.

“People pay money and deserve the very best that we can provide,” Eustler said. “Cleanliness and friendliness, everything we all aspire to be.”

He said they work to do things differently at Shenandoah Acres, including escorting campers to their site each visit they make, no matter if they have been to the campground several times, or if it’s their first time. Also, if you need ice or wood while you are camping, Eustler said it is delivered to the campers.

Additionally, there are many activities available at the campground, including swimming, miniature golf, an arcade and other things to check out while visiting Shenandoah Acres.

“We want to offer family activities because we’re a family campground,” he said. “That’s so important to us. We epitomize demographics for the camping culture. It’s family, family, family, it’s pure Americana.”

HISTORY

Eustler said Shenandoah Acres opened in 1935 and was known as “America’s Finest Inland Beach” for a long time.

“The lake was the destination for vacation. Literally, there are stories of generations of people who vacationed here,” he said.

Eustler said that through the years, things have not changed, but that Shenandoah Acres remains at the top of people’s lists because of the memories.

“First, it was more about the legend of Shenandoah Acres, and now it’s more about the staff and personnel, and the treatment that people get when they visit here,” he said.

That is something he and his staff plan to work to continue.

“We welcome the opportunity to give back to the communities,” Eustler said. “We treat people like we want to be treated, and it works.”
Clockwise from top left: Miniature golf is another fun summer activity available at the campground.

- Seasonal campers set up camp from about April 1 – Nov. 1.
- In addition to areas for camping, Shenandoah Acres offers 10 lakefront cottages.
- The lake is spring-fed.
- SVEC had to make a line extension due to additional load from seasonal campers and it foresees a new extension in the future due to new sites being added. Three new transformers were installed to help with the increased load.

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

**Aug. 6 — Tie-Dye Saturday Craft Time!** Kids 15 & under will have an opportunity to create a one-of-a-kind tie-dye masterpiece! T-shirts will be provided. This is a free event for registered campers.

**Aug. 19-21 — REDNECK WEEKEND:** Back by popular demand! Site decorating, cornhole, water fight, and much more! Make reservations early as they were booked solid last season!

**Sept. 2-5 — Labor Day Weekend:** Many events will be planned!

**Sept. 17 — Goodtimes Music Festival:**
Announcements to come.

**Sept. 24 — 2nd Annual Fall Cruise-In:** 10% off camping fees for all registered Cruise-In participants. This event is open to the public!

**Oct. 21-23 AND 28-30 — Halloween Weekends:**
Fear Forest, Trick or Treating, Costume and Site-Decorating Contests and MUCH MORE!

Visit the website at [www.shenandoahacresfamilycampground.com](http://www.shenandoahacresfamilycampground.com) or check the Facebook page for Shenandoah Acres Family Campground.